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Viewing cable 07BOGOTA7061, AMBASSADOR BROWNFIELD,S SEPTEMBER 26 MEETING WITH

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07BOGOTA7061	2007-09-30 20:47	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Bogota

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.semana.com/wikileaks/Seccion/168.aspx>

VZCZCXYZ0001
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #7061 2732047
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 302047Z SEP 07
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9204
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 9355
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

id: 124107
date: 9/30/2007 20:47
refid: 07BOGOTA7061
origin: Embassy Bogota
classification: CONFIDENTIAL
destination:
header:
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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #7061 2732047
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 302047Z SEP 07
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9204
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 9355

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 007061

SIPDIS

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FOR CA/OCS/ACS AND WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/30/2017

TAGS: [CASC](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CO](#) [VZ](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR BROWNFIELD,S SEPTEMBER 26 MEETING WITH
FARC HOSTAGES, FAMILIES

Classified By: Ambassador William R. Brownfield
Reason: 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Ambassador met September 26 with families of the three American hostages held by the FARC. The families appreciated the Ambassador's recent statements that he would not oppose other governments' efforts to resolve the hostages' detention. The Ambassador stressed the importance of obtaining concrete communication and proof of life from the FARC, and he encouraged the families to make the same point to those involved in the current humanitarian exchange initiative. The atmosphere throughout the meeting remained positive and cordial. End summary.

¶2. (U) The Ambassador, accompanied by DCM and ACS Chief, met September 26 at the Embassy with family members of FARC Amcit hostages Keith Stansell, Thomas Howes, and Marc Gonsalves. In attendance were Stansell's parents, Lynn and Gene Stansell; Gonsalves' father, George Gonsalves; and Howes' wife, Mariana Howes. Also attending were Stansell's 15-year old son Kyle and Howes' ten-year old son Tommy. Stephen Donehoo and Sarah King of the consulting firm Kissinger McLarty, which represents the families, also participated.

¶3. (SBU) The Ambassador began by expressing openness to new ideas that might lead to the hostages' safe return. He reiterated the U.S. policy against concessions to terrorists, noting that American lives had been saved as a result and more would in the future, but he repeated his previous public stance that the USG would not object if other countries or individuals were to facilitate their release from the FARC. The Ambassador explained that all options remain on the table, but stressed he would keep the welfare of the hostages foremost in his mind in considering any course of action. Lynn Stansell and Mariana Howes both expressed thanks in response to these points, and George Gonsalves said he "couldn't ask for more than that."

¶4. (C) The Ambassador described current efforts by Venezuelan President Chavez and Colombian Senator Piedad Cordoba as aimed at establishing lines of communication with a representative who could speak for the FARC. Once those lines are open, he said, the next step would be for the FARC to provide proof of life and to state concretely their conditions for the hostages' release. The Ambassador advised the families to make that same point during future conversations with President Chavez, Senator Cordoba, and others involved. Chavez and Cordoba had volunteered to take on the facilitator role. The families had a right to tell them what they expected.

¶5. (C) Mariana Howes described the families' meeting with President Chavez in Caracas the day before as "very positive," and Mr. Donehoo said Chavez understood the importance of obtaining proof of life. The Ambassador said he would try not to say anything publicly that might complicate Chavez's role in facilitating the hostages' release.

¶6. (C) Mr. Donehoo reported that Senator Cordoba would meet

with the FARC sometime in the next week and would request proof of life at that time. He also said she would take with her photos and letters from the families for delivery to the hostages. Mr. Donehoo expected Senator Cordoba to brief him on the meeting afterwards.

17. (U) In response to Mr. Donehoo's concerns about sometimes-inconsistent GOC messages about the current initiative, the Ambassador noted that events have moved quickly and surmised that the GOC might not yet have formulated a government-wide public posture. He assured the families that as President Uribe determined how to proceed he would set an appropriate GOC line and his minister's would follow it.

18. (U) Mr. Donehoo concluded the meeting by thanking the Ambassador on behalf of the families for his approach to the hostage issue. He and the Ambassador agreed that they would serve as the principal channel of communication for the families, although the Ambassador invited the families to contact him directly if they wished. Throughout the meeting, the families' maintained a positive, collaborative attitude, and expressed hope that the current initiative would bear fruit.

Brownfield

=====CABLE ENDS=====